

The initial investment in PV Solar Energy Generation is not a small one. However, in my case, my newly acquired pension lump sum was struggling to make me any money in a "safe" bank account, so I studied the postal flyer from Affordable Energy with interest. It seemed that to get a decent return on investment, one needed to purchase the largest-allowable system, which over the year should produce at least 104% of my electrical needs, or thereabouts. I was lucky to get in at the beginning of the government tariff scheme, which gives me 41p for every A/h produced, WHETHER I USE IT MYSELF OR NOT (!), and 44p for every A/h fed back into the grid which is surplus to my immediate requirements. Seemed like a no-brainer to me, especially as I can expect between 6% and 9% return on my investment over a year, a 10-year guarantee on the equipment which has at least a 25-year life-expectancy, and the government tariff is also guaranteed for 25 years!

The tariffs decrease depending when you sign up, so you need to make your mind up pretty soon to get the rates mentioned above. Also, the value of your property is enhanced, and if push comes to shove, the system can be taken with you if you move, not being "plumbed in" like the solar hot water system. Hence your investment is protected.

Yes, I am interested in the Green credentials of the PV system, but its economic sense is what swung it for me. The installation team really knew what they were about, and the system immediately started doing its stuff. I also had the Affordable Energy Master fitted, an advanced controller, which is promising to cut down my oil usage on my central heating and hot water by some 20%.

I know I have to average it out with the winter months, but in the reasonably sunny 4 days and one dull day, 5 in total, since having it fitted, I am showing a 12.2% return on investment, which bodes well!

So study the figures and make up your own mind. The installation causes the minimum of disruption, with only a 20-minute power-off, and seeing the Electricity Board's own meter running BACKWARDS, totting-up exactly what I am selling back to the grid, is one of the most satisfying sights I have seen in a long while!

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